

Peace Education in Secondary Schools: A Strategic Tool for Peace Building and Peace Culture in Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper discusses Peace Education as Strategic Tool for Peace Building and Peace Culture in Nigeria. This was prompted by the inherent incompatibility between the objectives of individuals, ethnic/social groups in Nigeria. The research question addresses Normative and Ethical issues regarding peace, the absence of violence/hostility and its education in secondary schools were discussed; two research questions and two hypotheses where addressed. Eighty Nine (89) subjects (Teachers) were selected from 124 (Public and Private) Secondary Schools in Delta State. The internal consistency of the questionnaire items were tested using the Cronbach alpha method with a coefficient of 0.87. A mean and t test statistics was used to analyze the research question and hypothesis. The study revealed that peace and cultural harmony goes hand in hand, in order for peace education to gain academic acceptance it has to be defined in terms of the predominant culture of the society and that anti-social vices should be dispirited amongst Nigerian. It recommends that the golden rule and other ethical codes of conduct should be infused into the curriculum of secondary schools in Nigeria and that Government should advocate for cross cultural education if peace education is to gain a lasting grip in Nigerian.

Keywords: Peace Education, Peace Building, Peace Culture, Normative issues, Ethical issues, cultural harmony

1. Introduction

The presence of conflict is definitely the absence of peace, which in general terms, is referred to as simply not being indifferent to the next person. Some scholars argue that peace is a psychological state, while others opine that it is of logical and normative value. In reality peace is a combination of both. It is a state of mind (Psychological) and demonstrated in action or reaction to another. It is a social concept that depicts the absence of violence, hostility, or even bloodshed in extreme terms. Originated from the Greek word "Eirene" connoting a state of oneness, quietness (stability) or a state of rest, or stable coexistence. Its usage dates back through time to the earliest forms of social structures.

Since the conclusion of the second world war in 1945, the concept of peace has continued to thrive and gain prominence, as a result of its promotion by organizations such as the United Nations, a metamorphoses of the League of Nation, an international organization whose primary aim is to ensure enforcement of international law, international security, economic development, social progress, human rights, and achieving world peace. It is a non-warring condition of a nation, group of nations, or the world that promotes the existence of healthy interpersonal or international relationships, fostering prosperity in matters of social and/or economic issues.

2. The Concept of Peace Culture and Peace Education

In the early years of peace studies, it was assumed that peace is the opposite of war; Peace was defined as the absence of war, partially because the early peace studies was strongly motivated by the reflection on the tragedies of the Second World War and by a sense of crisis of human survival caused by the danger of a total nuclear war between the two superpowers (Matsuo 2005). The concept of peace terms, According to United Nations Declaration on Peace culture or Culture of Peace and Non-Violence, it has been defined by the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace adopted in 1999; and the 1998 UN resolution on the culture of peace as "an integral approach to preventing violence and violent conflicts, and an alternative to the culture of war and violence based on education for peace, the promotion of sustainable economic and social development, respect for human rights, equality between women and men, democratic participation, tolerance, the free flow of information and disarmament."

In abstract terms, a culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behaviour and ways of life based on:

- a. Respect for life, ending of violence and promotion and practice of non-violence through education, dialogue and cooperation;
- b. Full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-intervention in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law;
- c. Full respect for and promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- d. Commitment to peaceful settlement of conflicts;
- e. Efforts to meet the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations;
- f. Respect for and promotion of the right to development;

- g. Respect for and promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men;
- h. Respect for and promotion of the right of everyone to freedom of expression, opinion and information;
- i. Adherence to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations; and fostered by an enabling national and international environment conducive to peace. (United Nations, Fifty-third session, 1999)

Generally speaking, peace is both a means to an end and an end in itself as Ibeanu (2004) described that it is a process involving activities that are directly or indirectly linked to increasing development and reducing conflict, both within specific societies and in the wider international community.

2.1 Peace Education

The Concept of Peace Education relates to Peace building, Conflict resolution, Peace Enforcement etc., as Fountain, S. (1999) defined it as the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behaviour changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level.

In addition Deutsch, M. (1993), opined that Peace education centered on conflict resolution, typically focus on the social-behavioural symptoms of conflict, training individuals to resolve inter-personal disputes through techniques of negotiation and (peer) mediation.

It is the process of acquiring the core values, knowledge and the development of skills to live in synchrony with others, and the natural environment.

Research Question

1. What are aspects of peace can be used as a tools in peace building and peace culture
2. To what extent will Peace Education promote peace building and Peace culture in Nigeria

Research Hypothesis

H_01 – There is no significant relationship between peace building and cultural harmony in Nigeria.

H_02 – There is no significant relationship between peace building and peace culture in terms of the predominant culture of the society.

3. Methodology

This paper employs a descriptive survey design with a population sample consisting of Eighty Nine (89) Teachers selected from 124 Public and Private Secondary Schools (27% of secondary schools) in Delta State, based on the number of questionnaire retrieved using a systematic random sampling method. The instrument developed for data collection was a 15 item questionnaire designed to capture the opinions of the respondents using a four point scale of Strongly Agree (SA)/High Extent, Agree (A)/Average Extent, Disagree (D)/Low Extent, and Strongly Disagree (SD)/No Extent was employed. The Experts in Measurement and Evaluation and Educational Psychology face validated the tool. A coefficient of 0.87 was obtained using the Cronbach alpha to test for the internal consistency of the questionnaire items, while an arithmetic mean was used to test the research question, and a t test statistics for the research hypothesis. An arbitrary, but logical neutral point of 2.5 forming the average was calculated for each item, signifying that all variables below 2.5 are negative (Disagree) and all variables above 2.5 mean mark are considered positive (Agree). The null hypothesis of no relationship was accepted for any items whose calculated value was greater than the t-critical value and rejected if reverse is the case.

Results

The results of the study were obtained from the research question and hypotheses tested, presented in Tables 1-2 below

Research Question one

Table 1: Respondent's Mean rating on the aspects of peace can be used as tools in peace building and peace culture

S/N	Item	N	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD
1.	Primary forms of social responsibility	89	35	23	19	12	2.91	1.07
2.	Basic conflict management	89	28	24	22	15	2.73	1.08
3.	Basic social awareness and relationship skills	89	31	29	17	12	2.89	1.03
4.	Primary Family partnership	89	24	33	21	11	2.79	0.98
5.	Self-awareness and self-development	89	25	35	16	13	2.81	1.01
6.	Basic cultural diversity	89	22	38	15	14	2.76	1.00
7.	Primary forms of Morality	89	33	18	21	17	2.75	1.14
8.	Self-management	89	29	31	17	12	2.87	1.02
9.	Nigerian cultural practices and societal norms	89	23	30	17	19	2.64	1.08
10.	Primary ethical and moral values	89	31	34	14	10	2.97	0.97
11.	Anti-racial values	89	36	20	16	17	2.84	1.15
12.	Social, ethnic and Individual objectivity	89	23	31	22	13	2.72	1.01
13.	Anti-social vices	89	34	26	18	11	2.93	1.04
14.	Basic Normative Ethics regarding peace	89	21	39	22	8	2.81	0.90
15.	Negativity in hostility and violence	89	26	33	18	12	2.82	1.00
	Grand Mean						2.82	1.03

The Table 1 above revealed the result of all items scored above 2.50 indicating that all items were accepted as aspects of peace that can be used as a tools in peace building and cultivating peace culture in Nigeria. This was further confirmed by the cluster mean of 2.82 ± 1.03 , which is higher than the average mean of 2.50.

Research Question two

Using the following mean range: 0.00-1.49 (No Extent), 1.50-2.49 (Low Extent), 2.50-3.49 (Average Extent), 3.50-4.00 (High Extent)

Table 2: Respondent's Mean rating on the extent at which Peace Education will promote peace building and Peace culture in Nigeria

S/no	Item	N	High extent	Average extent	Low extent	No extent	Mean	Remark
1.	Reduce violence/hostility amongst rivaling communities	89	28	33	21	7	2.92	Average Extent
2.	Consolidates democracy through dialogue	89	26	29	18	16	2.67	Average Extent
3.	Reduction of chaos and peacelessness amongst Nigerian youths	89	23	31	14	21	2.63	Average Extent
4.	Increases psychological tranquility among youths in Nigeria	89	32	25	17	15	2.83	Average Extent
5.	Increases societal stability and consonance	89	26	29	12	22	2.66	Average Extent
6.	Improves the understanding of individual and collective self-identities while promoting fundamental human rights	89	21	37	22	9	2.79	Average Extent
							2.75	Average Extent

The Table 2 above revealed the result of all items scored within the range of 2.50-3.49 indicating that to an average extent the above were areas at which Peace Education will promote peace building and Peace culture in Nigeria. This was further confirmed by the cluster mean of 2.75, which also falls within the mean range of 2.50-3.49, also indicating that Reduce violence/hostility amongst rivaling communities, Consolidating democracy through dialogue, Reduction of chaos and peacelessness amongst Nigerian youths, Increase in psychological tranquility among youths in Nigeria, Increase in societal stability and consonance, and Improving the understanding of individual and collective self-identities while promoting fundamental human rights were to an Average Extent issues of Peace Education that will promote peace building and Peace culture in Nigeria.

Hypotheses One:

H_0 – There is no significant relationship between peace building and cultural harmony in Nigeria.
 The results obtained are presented in the table below.

Table 3: T-test statistics for hypothesis one.

Item	N	Mean	SD	Df	T-calc	T-critical	Remark
Peace building	89	2.82	0.95	88	0.047	1.984	Rejected
Cultural harmony		2.83	1.03				

P < 0.05

As shown in the table above the calculated t value of 0.047 is less than the critical t value of 1.984. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative is accepted. This shows that there is a significant relationship between peace building and cultural harmony in Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses Two

H₀₂ – There is no significant relationship between peace building and peace culture in terms of the predominant culture of the society.

The results obtained are presented in the table below.

Table 4: T-test statistics for hypothesis one.

Item	N	Mean	SD	Df	T-calc	T-Critical	Remark
peace building		2.82	0.95				
peace culture in terms of the predominant culture of the society	89	2.77	1.03	88	0.238	1.984	Rejected

P < 0.05

As shown in the table above the calculated t value of 0.238 is less than the critical t value of 1.984. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative is accepted. This shows that there is a significant relationship between peace building and peace culture in terms of the predominant culture of the society.

4. Research Findings

The results presented above, revealed that, primary forms of social responsibility, basic conflict management and basic social awareness and relationship skills, primary family partnership, self-awareness and self-development, basic cultural diversity were considered aspects of peace that can be used as tools in peace building and peace culture, which is inline with United Nations (2012). The study further revealed that primary forms of morality, self-management, Nigerian cultural practices and societal norms, primary ethical and moral values, anti-racial values, social ethics and individual objectivity, antisocial vices, basic normative ethics regarding peace, negativity in hostility were other aspects of peace that can be used as tools in peace building and peace culture. Furthermore, it was revealed that there is a significant relationship between peace building and cultural harmony in Nigeria. In conclusion, it was further revealed that there is a significant relationship between peace building and peace culture in terms of the predominant culture of the society as supported by Ogura K. (2010) in the Japan Foundation (2014).

5. Conclusion

Peace is a social concept that depicts the absence of violence, hostility, or war. It is absence of conflict which in general terms regarded as the fundamental basis for social stability and the development of human societies. Peace building is the logical intervention to prevent the generation of conflict by creating sustainable peace. Peace education, however is not the same peace building. The first refers to the people's development of positive minds, while the second integrates aspects of economic and social justice. Both concepts however are related as they both attempt to improve the situation of human rights (Baxter and Ikobwa, 2012). Researchers, Government and Non-governmental organisations alike need to imbibe a peace culture, a constant deliberate act of mediation and conflict prevention and resolution. It is only by such means that Peace Education can actually be used as a Strategic Tool for Peace Building and Peace Culture in Nigeria.

5.1 Recommendation

Based on the findings of this paper, the researcher recommends that:

1. Government and non-governmental organization should collaborate with researchers and research institute on devising ways to inculcate peace culture in the minds of the Nigerian citizens
2. Government should introduce Peace education in primary and secondary schools through its educational agencies like the Universal Basic Education (UBE)
3. Government should empower youths at the grass root level to promote peace building and peace culture in Nigeria

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